



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 4
ATLANTA FEDERAL CENTER
61 FORSYTH STREET
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303-8960

DEC 20 2016

Ms. April Williams, P.E.
District Environmental Management Engineer
Florida Department of Transportation
107 4 Highway 90
Chipley, Florida 32428

Re: EPA Review Comments on the Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision for the State Road 87 Connector, Santa Rosa County, Florida; CEQ No.: 20160273

Dear Ms. Williams:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has reviewed the referenced Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and Record of Decision (ROD) in accordance with its responsibilities under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act and Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) are proposing a new roadway project that will directly link State Road (SR) 87 South with SR 87 North in the vicinity of the City of Milton in Santa Rosa County, Florida.

The proposed roadway includes the construction of a new divided four-lane, semi-controlled access facility from US 90/SR 87S intersection to just north of the convergence of SR 87N and SR 89. The new roadway is proposed to be built in two separate phases. Initially, it will include the interim two-lane facility and, as demand increases the road would be expanded to four lanes, if needed, to ultimately match the four-lane sections at the existing SR 97S and SR 87N facilities. All right-of-way required for the four-lane facility would be acquired during the first phase of the project.

The EPA reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the subject project and provided comments in a letter dated December 2, 2014. The DEIS was rated as 'EC-2' or environmental concerns with additional information being requested. Our primary environmental concerns outlined in our DEIS comment letter related to social and economic impacts, air quality impacts, noise mitigation, wetland and floodplain impacts, water quality impacts, and contaminated site issues. The EPA acknowledges the separate detailed responses to comments provided in Appendix M of the FEIS. The EPA has reviewed Appendix M and the FEIS and notes that the FHWA and FDOT have substantially responded to our comments provided on the DEIS.

The EPA appreciates the opportunity to review the FEIS/ROD. Should the FDOT or FHWA have any questions regarding our comments, please feel free to contact Ms. Amanetta Somerville, of my staff, at 404-562-9025 or by e-mail at somerville.amanetta@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'G. Alan Farmer', with a stylized flourish at the end.

G. Alan Farmer
Director

Resource Conservation and Restoration Division